

Fort Des Moines (No. 1) Iowa. "

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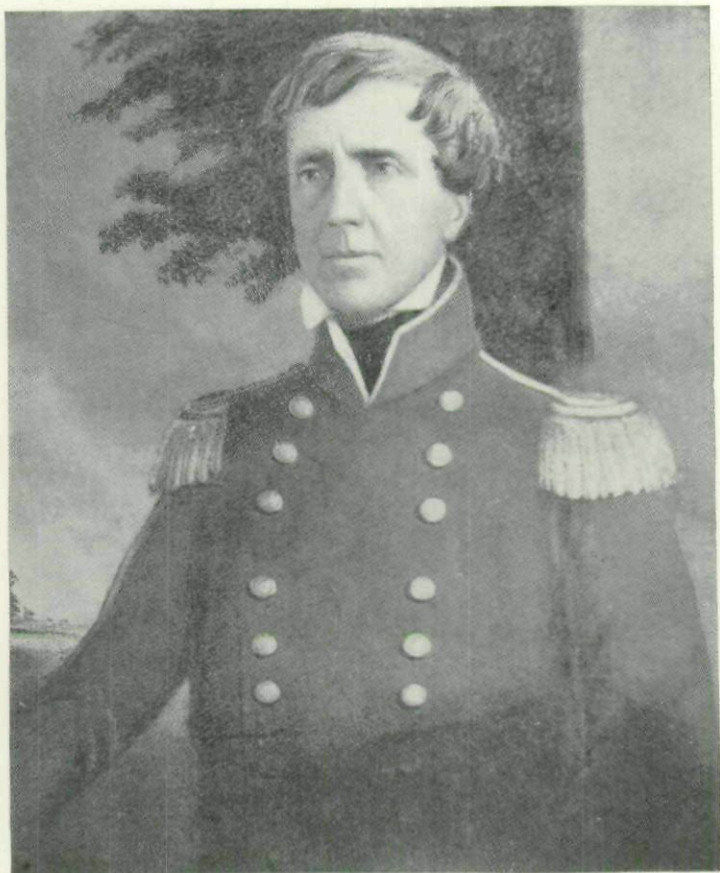
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STEPHEN WATTS KEARNY.

Appointed from civil life 1st Lieutenant in the Regular Army, March 12, 1812, and rose to the rank of Brig. and Brevet Major General. See note on page 369. This engraving is published here through the courtesy of Mr. Johnson Brigham, editor of *The Midland Monthly*, Des Moines, Iowa.

FORT DES MOINES (NO. 1), IOWA.*

A U. S. frontier post located on the right bank of the Mississippi river, above the mouth of the Des Moines, near the site of what is now the town of Montrose. Lat. 40° 25'. Long. 14° 30' West Wash.

The establishment of a military post at this point was an outcome of the Act of Congress (1833) which provided for the better defense of the frontier by the raising of a regiment of Dragoons to scout the country west of the Mississippi. This movement is outlined in the report of Secretary Cass dated 29 November, 1833, accompanying the President's Annual Message. He says:

"The act for the better defense of the frontiers by raising a regiment of dragoons is in process of execution. About six hundred men have been enlisted and most of the officers appointed, and five of the companies have been ordered to proceed to Fort Gibson, upon the Arkansas, where they will be stationed during the winter. The remainder of the regiment will be concentrated at Jefferson Barracks this season, and it is intended in the spring to order the whole to proceed through the extensive Indian regions between the western boundaries of Missouri and Arkansas and the Rocky Mountains. It is deemed indispensable to the peace and security of the frontiers that a respectable force should be displayed in that quarter, and that the wandering and restless tribes who roam through it should be impressed with the power of the United States by the exhibition of a corps so well qualified to excite their respect. These Indians are beyond the reach of a mere infantry force. Without stationary residences, and possessing an abundant supply of horses, and with habits admirably adapted to their use, they can be held in check only by a similar force, and by occasional display among them. Almost every year has witnessed some outrage committed by them upon our citizens, and, as many of the Indian tribes from the country this side of the Mississippi have removed and are removing to that region, we may anticipate their exposure to these predatory incursions, unless vigorous measures are adopted to repel them. We owe protection to the emigrants, and it has been solemnly promised to them; and this duty can only be fulfilled by repressing and punishing every attempt to disturb the general tranquility. Policy and humanity equally dictate this course; and there is reason to hope that the display of this force will itself render unnecessary its hostile employment."

*This article was prepared at the War Department for THE ANNALS OF IOWA.

In the execution of this project Col. Henry Dodge, with nine companies of the regiment of dragoons, left Fort Gibson on the 15th June, 1834, and entered upon the ill-fated expedition to the Pawnee country which resulted in the death of General Leavenworth* and so large a number of his officers and men from a sickness incident to the climatic changes, that reorganization of the regiment was rendered necessary, as well as its transfer to more northern latitudes. Accordingly on the return of the expedition to Fort Gibson four companies under Colonel Dodge were marched to Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri; three under Major Mason to a point on the Arkansas about 80 miles above Fort Gibson, and the remainder under Lieutenant Colonel Kearny to the region of the Des Moines. By orders from the War Department dated 19th May, 1834, the regiment of Dragoons was ordered "to take up their winter quarters in the following positions: Lieutenant Colonel Kearny with three companies, viz: Sumner's, Boone's and Browne's, on the right bank of the Mississippi, within the Indian country near the mouth of the Desmoines."

A short rest at Gibson pending the convalescence of the sick list, delayed the movements of Colonel Kearny until the season had been well advanced, although a Quartermaster's force had left Jefferson Barracks early in the summer to select the site and lay the foundations for the buildings. On the 2d September, he writes from *Camp Carrington* near Fort Gibson, "I shall leave here to-morrow with companies B, H, and I, U. S. Dragoons for the Des Moines, crossing the Missouri River at Boonville (Missouri)," adding, "I have to request that a name be given for the new post at the Des Moines, and that it may be considered as a double-ration one." The force which left Fort Gibson on the 3d of September, 1834, for the Des Moines, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Stephen W. Kearny, consisted of Company B of the regiment of Dragoons, Captain E. V. Sumner

*Henry Leavenworth, born Conn. 10 Dec., 1783; Capt. 25th Infantry 1812; Bvt. Lieut.-Col. for distinguished services at Chippewa 1814; commanded expedition against Arickaree Indians on Missouri river; Bvt. Brig.-Gen. 10 years service 1824; Col. 3d Inf't. 1825; died at Cross Timbers, near False Wachita, S. W. Ter. 21 July, 1834.

and 2d Lieutenant J. H. K. Burgwin;* Company H, which owing to the absence of Captain Boone and Lieutenant Schumburgh who had been left sick at Gibson, was also commanded by Captain Sumner; Company I, Captain J. B. Browne and Brevet 2d Lieutenant A. G. Edwards, together with an aggregate of 107 non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates. 1st Lieutenant George H. Crosman† of the 6th Infantry accompanied the command as Assistant Quartermaster, while the duties of Adjutant and Commissary were performed by Lieutenant Burgwin.

On the 26th September, Lieutenant Colonel Kearny writing from *Camp Des Moines*, reports his arrival which occurred late the preceding evening: "The quarters for the officers and soldiers," he complains, "are not as far advanced as I had expected and not a log is yet laid for stables for our horses. We shall on the 28th go to work with all our disposable force, and I hope by the close of next month we may complete the buildings, tho' they will be less comfortable and of meaner appearance, than those occupied by any other portion of the Army." He is yet uncertain as to the purposes for which he has been sent to this most isolated spot. "I should like to know," he adds, "if it is contemplated that we are to occupy this post, after the ensuing winter, and I wish to know whether I am authorized to keep away settlers from here, and how far I may proceed in doing so; also what is required of this command, while stationed here"

The winter of 1834-5 was one of unusual severity in that section and it appears from Colonel Kearny's frequent complaints that the command experienced no little suffering from uncomfortable quarters and insufficient supplies. Captain Boone joined his company during the winter, but Lieutenant

*John Henry K. Burgwin, cadet 1826-30; Bvt. 2d Lieut. 2d Infantry 1830; 2d Lieut. 1st Dragoons 1833; 1st Lieut. 1st Dragoons 1835; Capt. 1st Dragoons 1837; commanded in attack on Pueblo-de-Taos, New Mexico, and mortally wounded 4th Feb., 1847, died the 7th.

†George H. Crosman, cadet 1819-23; Bvt. 2d Lieut. 3d Infantry 1823; 2d Lieut. 6th Infantry 1823; 1st Lieut. 6th Infantry 1828; Asst. Quartermaster 1830-38; Capt. 6th Infantry 1837-46; Bvt. Major 1846; Bvt. Brig. Gen. and Bvt. Major Gen. U. S. Army 1865; died in Philadelphia, Pa., 1882, aged 84.

Crosman having been recalled to St. Louis, all the administrative duty of the Garrison devolved upon Lieut. Burgwin. On the 1st February, 1835, we find Colonel Kearny again urging upon the War Department that a name be given to the post, which up to that time he had designated as merely "the Detachment Headquarters of the Regiment of Dragoons at Camp Des Moines, Michigan Territory." On the back of this appeal we find in the familiar handwriting of Mr. Secretary Lewis Cass—"Let the post be called *Fort Des Moines*, and let it be a double-ration post."

The date and authority for the naming* of the river from which the fort takes its name in turn is involved in much obscurity. On the map made by Pere Marquette in 1681, first found in Charlevoix's narrative published in 1743, a river corresponding with this is marked "le reviere des Moingonina," which Charlevoix refers to as *Moingona*, but there is nothing in the narrative of either of these early explorers to indicate the authority for attaching the name to this particular stream. Joliet and Marquette as well as the most of the early voyageurs along the Mississippi, owed their first allegiance to the Church; a controlling cause which has had the effect of tinging many of its landmarks with names and titles of sacred subjects. If to this circumstance is added the probability recently advanced by a Canadian writer that the Illinois country had been visited prior to the voyage of Joliet and Marquette by two priests, it affords a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, *Le riviere des Moines*—the river of the monks, and not *des moyens*, as written by Wilkinson and Pike at the beginning of the present century.

The War Department at no time intended the post at the mouth of the Des Moines to be a permanent one, but rather as a point for the winter quarters of the Dragoon regiment which was to operate in the country to the westward, working gradually to the northwest limit of our Territory where it was contemplated to erect a permanent fort. On the 11th

*See note on page 101.

April, Col. Kearny reports the arrival of 79 recruits, increasing his force to an aggregate of 157, and urges upon the Department the desirability of keeping his command employed in the field as a means of discipline and instruction of which they were sadly in need. Before the receipt of this however, instructions were already on their way, which combined all the purposes of Colonel Kearny's communication. Orders of 9th March, 1835, from the Adjutant General's office, directed that—

The three companies under the command of Lieut. Colonel Kearny will proceed up the River Des Moines to the Raccoon Fork, there halt and reconnoitre the position with a view to the selection of a site for the establishment of a military post in that vicinity; on which subject Lieut. Colonel Kearny will report on his return to his winter quarters at Fort Des Moines. After having made this reconnaissance Lieut. Colonel Kearny will proceed with his command to the Sioux Villages near the highlands on the Mississippi about the 44° of North Latitude, thence taking a direction to the westward return to his original position at the mouth of the Des Moines, passing by the right bank of that river.

Colonel Kearny writes on the 5th in acknowledgment of these orders. "I shall leave here," he says, "on the 7th, to execute the duties pointed out for me in Orders No. 12. I shall take about 150 men—Company B, commanded by Brevet 2d Lieut. Turner;* Company H, by Captain Boone, and Company I, by 2d Lieut. Lea; Assistant Surgeon Wright† goes with us. The above and myself are all the officers for the march. You will see I have no Staff officer. Lieut. Burgwin, I leave here to provide forage for the ensuing winter and Captain Browne is too unwell to start with us.

* * * * I hope to return by the middle of August."

As this expedition was charged with the duty of selecting the site for a fort, which afterwards succeeded to the name and honors of the post at the mouth of the river, so

*Henry S. Turner, cadet 1830-34; Bvt. 2d Lieut. 1st Dragoons 1834; Adjutant 1836; Acting Asst. Adjt.-Gen. to Gen. Kearny on march to Cal.; Captain 1st Dragoons 1846; Bvt. Major for gallant conduct in battle of San Pasqual, Cal. 1846; resigned 1848; died Dec., 1881, St. Louis, Mo., aged 70.

†Joseph J. B. Wright, Asst. Surgeon 1833; Surgeon 1844; medical purveyor for army in Mexico; distinguished at battle of Cerro Gordo, and at the storming of El Molino del Rey; died Carlisle, Pa., 1878.

much of the report of Colonel Kearny as relates to his visit to the new site is subjoined:

On the 8th, (of August, 1835), he says, we reached the mouth of the Raccoon where I halted to reconnoitre the country with a view to the selection of a site for a military post in that vicinity as directed by you.

After riding over a considerable portion of the country myself, and sending off officers in different directions with a view to the same object, I could neither see, nor hear of any place, that possessed the necessary advantages, or in my opinion was suitable for the establishment of a Military Post. The point of land, in the fork, at the junction of the Raccoon with the Des Moines, would probably answer as well as any other place in that vicinity. It is about eight feet above high water mark—a narrow strip of prairie commences here, but widens out as the two rivers recede. On the opposite side of the Des Moines, which is there about 360 feet wide and $3\frac{1}{2}$ deep, being a good ford, is a great abundance of timber, Oak, Walnut, Elm, Ash, Linn and Cottonwood, which would answer for Building and firewood. We saw no Springs near the place; Wells however could be dug. About a mile up the Des Moines is a Bluff containing stone coal, and a small quantity of silicious Limestone, but apparently not enough for the necessary chimnies of a small Post, nor do I believe it can be burned in Lime. If a Post should be established there, I think stone and lime must be brought to it from near the mouth of the North Fork, a distance by Land of about 45 miles, and 60 by water. It is by land 150 miles from Fort Des Moines, and 266 by water to the mouth of the Des Moines River.

I caused a Canoe to be made in which Lieut. Lea, with a few soldiers descended the Des Moines, to its mouth, to examine the practicability of navigating it, and the means by which supplies could be obtained there. I send you his Report. Unless some obstructions are removed the navigation of the Des Moines to the Raccoon, by Boats sufficiently large to carry Stores, &c., for a Military Post, I am convinced will be at all times uncertain, and but for a very small portion of the year, practicable. Lieut. Lea thinks there are positions near the mouth of Cedar (96 miles by water below the Raccoon) offering more advantages for a Military Post, such as Springs, Lime Stone, and less difficulty in navigating River, than any we saw above. If a Post is established in that section of Country, the officer commanding the party sent for that purpose, should of course have discretionary power to select such place as may appear to him most favorable within such limits to distance as may be deemed necessary to restrict him.

With the views of the Department as to the object to be obtained by the establishment of a military Post at the Raccoon I am unacquainted, but I can imagine nothing to make it necessary or advisable. If it is intended as a barrier between the Sacs and Sioux, and thereby to put a stop to their predatory excursions against each other it is unnecessary—the former Indians from what I have myself seen and heard and by informa-

tion gained from persons acquainted with them, I know to be inclined to a permanent Peace, which can be easily secured by some restraints imposed upon the latter. These we now have within striking distance and they know and feel it. Their two Villages on the Des Moines (Keokuck and Openousas) containing the leading Men of the Nation are within 55 and 75 miles from Fort Des Moines. On my return, I marched with my command thro' both of them, thus making a Road from them to this Post, convincing them, they are not inaccessible to us, and that we can reach them when we think proper so to do. The Secretary of War is well acquainted with the Indian character, and he knows, that mild measures will not restrain an Indian, from gratifying his passions, when provoked, or prevent him from distinction, by the taking of a scalp when a fair opportunity offers. If a permanent peace between the above Nations of Indians is an object of much importance with the Department, I can easily effect it, if I can be authorized to repeat to them, what in 1830 by order of the then Secretary of War, they were told by Colonel Morgan,* one of the Commissioners of the treaty held at Prairie du Chien, and if I can be further authorized upon the first infraction of the Peace to pursue the offenders and punish them.

If it is not deemed expedient to grant the above authority, but a Military Post between the two Nations still thought necessary, then a post at the Raccoon is not sufficiently advanced—it should be about 100 miles above there, viz: at the Upper Fork of the Des Moines, which is the neutral ground (a strip of 40 miles) which separates them.

If a Post is required on the Des Moines to protect the frontiers of Missouri, one at the Raccoon would be altogether too far advanced.

To conclude, all the Sauk Indians (and there were many) who spoke to me, of the probability of a Military Post being established near the Raccoon were strongly and most decidedly opposed to it, giving as one of their objections, that the Whites would drive off the little game that is left in their country.

From an Inspection report of Colonel Geo. Croghan,† who visited the post on the 3d December, 1835, we are enabled to catch a glimpse of the condition of the work at that time. At the time of his visit, the garrison under the command of Lieut. Colonel Kearny consisted of Company B, Dragoons, Captain Sumner, rank and file 59, with 72 animals; Captain Boone, 49 rank and file, with 68 animals, and Company I,

*Willoughby Morgan, Capt. 12th Infantry 1812; Major 12th Infantry 1813; Major rifle 1817; Lieut. Col. 1818; Bvt. Col. 10 years faithful service 1828; Col. 1st Infantry 1830; died 14th April, 1832, at Fort Crawford.

†George Croghan, born 1791; aid in battle of Tippecanoe 1811; Capt. 17th Infantry 1812; Major 1813; distinguished in command of Ft. Stephenson, Lower Meigs 1813 and bvt'd. Lieut.-Col.; Postmaster New Orleans 1824; Inspector General 1825; received gold medal from Congress for gallant conduct at Ft. Stephenson 1835; died 8 Jan., 1849, at New Orleans.

Captain Browne, 56 rank and file, with 65 animals, making a total strength of 184 officers and men, with 205 horses and mules. "The Quarters," he reports, "are of a temporary character, hastily constructed and of round logs. They are now more comfortable than they were last winter; the men since their return from the summer campaign having made in them some material and essential alterations. The roofs of several of the buildings are bad and leaky."

Concerning the health of the garrison which he regards as unnecessarily bad, and the Hospital facilities also, he says, "the building is comfortable, tho' too small to accommodate more than six or eight patients, and as there is but one ward, they must all be together. Its location too is bad, being near a creek, on the opposite side of which there is a bottom, subject to overflow whenever the Mississippi rises much above its ordinary level."

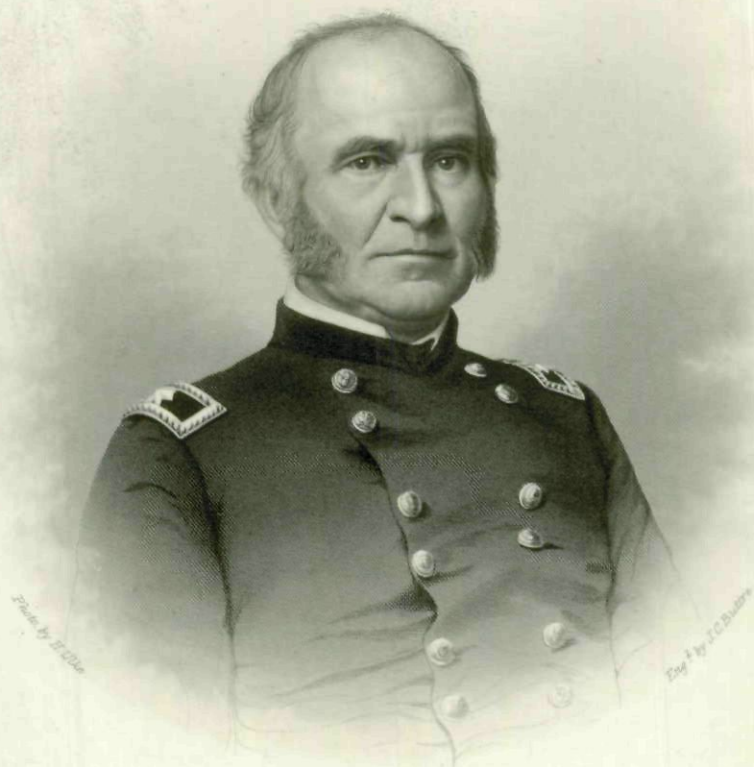
On the 6th June, 1836, Captain Sumner with all the available troops left the post for the usual summer campaign, leaving the post in command of Lieut. B. S. Roberts* of the Dragoon regiment who had recently joined from the Military Academy. At this date the garrison had reached its greatest strength and efficiency. Its officers were Captains E. V. Sumner, N. Boone and J. B. Browne, commanding their respective companies, 1st. Lieut. J. H. K. Burgwin of E Company, acting Quartermaster and Commissary, 2d Lieut. A. M. Lea of I Company and J. W. Schaumburgh of H, Brevet 2d Lieut. J. H. Hanly† of B Company and B. S. Roberts of H, the latter acting as Post Adjt., and Assistant Surg. S. P. Moore,‡ with an aggregate rank and file of 184.

The resignation of Colonel Dodge in the spring of 1836

*Benjamin Stone Roberts, cadet 1830-35; Bvt. 2d Lieut. Dragoons 1835; 1st Lieut. 1837; Asst. Geol. in N. Y. 1841; 1st Lieut. mounted riflemen 1846; Capt. 1847; Bvt. Major for gallant conduct at Chapultepec 1847; Bvt. Lieut. Col. for gallant conduct at Matamoras and Pass of Gualaxara 1847; received Jan. 15, 1849, sword of honor for Mexican war service from Iowa legislature; greatly distinguished during the rebellion—brevetted Brig. and Major Gen.; died Jan. 29, 1875, at Washington.

†John H. Hanly, cadet 1831-35; Bvt. 2d Lieut. 1st Dragoons 1835; 2d Lieut. 1st Dragoons 1836; served at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, 1835-36; died 26 May, 1836, at Ft. Leavenworth, aged 22.

‡Samuel P. Moore, Asst. Surgeon 1835; Surgeon 1848.



B. S. Roberts

BRIG. GEN. BENJ. STONE ROBERTS.

promoted Lieut. Colonel Kearny to the command of the regiment of Dragoons which took him to Fort Leavenworth, the headquarters of the regiment, and the command of Fort Des Moines devolved upon Captain E. V. Sumner, pending the arrival of Lieut. Col. Mason who had succeeded to the vacancy. The history of the fort up to this period, and in fact during its whole career, was uneventful. The site in every military sense had been badly chosen, its locality unhealthy, and to reach the country through which the command was expected to scout involved long and tedious marches. That the post had been maintained so long at this point was the result of the delay and irresolution of the authorities in deciding upon the site of a point farther up the Des Moines and nearer the frontier, the details of which are more fully reported in the history of Fort Des Moines, No. 2. Beyond this, the post was experiencing the inevitable difficulty that has accompanied the career of most of our frontier posts, the rapacity of land-agents and the continuous encroachments of settlers upon the lands surrounding the garrison.

On the 18th September, 1836, Colonel Mason writes the War Department:

A town has been laid off at this place and lots sold, which takes in a part of our garrison. This town has been laid off on a tract of land which I am told was granted on a grant confirmed by Congress to the heirs of one "Reddick." I have none of the Acts of Congress by me and cannot therefore more particularly point the Act confirming the grant. You will at once perceive, under the circumstances, how certain it is that we must come in collision with the citizens of this town who have already commenced to build.

I see by a letter of Colonel Kearny's to the Hon. Secretary of War dated September 27th, 1835, and his answer thereto, that some steps were about to be taken to have a reserve of two miles out from this post for military purposes. This reserve is absolutely necessary to the convenience and well being of the garrison. Independent of the town there are other parties putting up buildings within the two miles, and their object is to sell whiskey to the Indians and soldiers. All this within the country given to the half-breeds, Sacs and Foxes. I shall be glad to receive specific instructions for my government, in relation to the town and individuals erecting buildings within the two miles proposed as a reservation for this post.

On receipt of this it was immediately determined to

abandon the post without delay rather than encounter the conflict with the land-grasping element in the western section, with whom the department had already a sufficient and unpleasant experience. As a result of this policy, General Orders No. 71, from the Adjutant General's Office dated 20th October, 1836, directed that:

The Dragoon post of Fort Des Moines will be broken up without delay, and the squadron immediately proceed to join the Headquarters of the regiment at Fort Leavenworth. The Quartermaster's Department will receive and make the proper disposition of the stores and public property pertaining to the post when evacuated.

It was not however until the following summer that the arrangements necessary to an evacuation of the post were fully completed. Colonel Mason, who was absent on detached duty at St. Louis and elsewhere, remained away during the entire winter, the post being under the command of Captain J. B. Browne, with Lieut. Roberts as Adjutant. Colonel Croghan again visited the post on the 26th November, 1836, and his report affords us the last glimpse of the inner history of the Fort.

"There has been a good deal of sickness here this season," he remarks, "chiefly cases of intermittent fever, but the number on the sick reports are lessening daily. Were a garrison to be continued here much longer (and I hope it may not) a hospital should be erected, the one now occupied being inconveniently arranged, too small by one-half, and moreover badly located, near the bank of a miry creek which is stagnant during the warm months." The store houses he finds are not only too small, but are in bad repair, open in places and everywhere "full of chinks and unsafe." In concluding he refers to the matter already alluded to in the monthly report:

The company under orders to proceed to Fort Leavenworth, is filled exclusively by selection from the entire command, of such soldiers as have not less than 12 months to serve. It having departed, the garrison will then consist of the Lieut. Colonel Commandant, a Captain and a subaltern, with scarcely men enough to attend to the stable duties, as there will be many surplus horses requiring their care. And what will be the strength of this command by or before the close of next April? 18 rank and file, every other enlistment will by that time have terminated, and of the offi-

cers, it is believed that the Lieut. Colonel alone will be willing to remain in service after the commencement of the Spring.

The breaking-up process commenced on the 30th October, 1836, when B Company left the Post under the command of Captain Sumner for Fort Leavenworth.

This movement was not in accordance with the War Department order, but the carrying out of a project of the Department Commander General Atkinson,* "for the better protection of the frontier." "Still," writes General Kearny to Colonel Mason, "I do not think Company B will return to Fort Des Moines, and therefore what public property it may require and cannot bring with it, you will order to be sent to St. Louis without delay to be forwarded to this Post (Leavenworth)."

In reporting the departure of Sumner's company Colonel Mason adds:

In making the transfer ordered by the Colonel, it has taken every man from Companies H and I, who had more than one year to serve, that was off the sick report, to fill up Company B. There is now left belonging to this post but 76 men (one of which is absent in confinement), 58 of whom will be discharged during the winter and early part of the Spring, so that by the 15th May next there will be only 18 enlisted men in the two Companies which garrison the Post.

Immediately on the receipt of this letter at the War Department it was decided, in view of the situation set forth by Colonel Mason, which was supplemented a few days later by a report from the Commandant at Fort Leavenworth that the quarters at the latter post were insufficient to accommodate the Fort Des Moines garrison, that the latter had best remain at that post during the winter should its Commandant not have already complied with General Orders No. 71. Orders suspending that movement were accordingly sent to Colonel Mason, reaching him before he had concluded his arrangements to evacuate the post.

During the most of this winter the absence of Colonel Mason devolved the command upon Captain Jesse B.

*Henry Atkinson, Capt. 3d Infantry 1808; Asst. Inspector Gen. and Inspector Gen. 1813; Col. 45th Infantry 1814; trans. to 37th Infantry; Brig.-Gen. 1820; Col. 6th Infantry with Bvt. Brig. Gen. 1821; Commanded Western Army in engagement with Sac Indians 1832; died 14 June, 1842, at Jefferson Barracks, Mo.

Browne of I Company. Concerning this officer but little is known at the War Department. He entered the service as a Captain of Rangers in 1832, was transferred to the Dragoons regiment upon its organization, and accompanied his regiment to Des Moines where all of his service in the Army was performed, he resigning his commission 30 June, 1837, immediately after the abandonment of the post, in order to engage in civil pursuits. Nothing is known regarding his subsequent whereabouts.

Early in the Spring of 1837, Colonel Mason returned to the post, and on the 30th March he addresses the War Department for information as to the probable duration of the post, in order that he may regulate his requisitions for the needed supplies. In this letter he remarks: "The town which I mentioned to you in my letter as having been laid out and taking in part of this post has been abandoned, the title of the proprietors proving not to be good." Before the receipt of this letter, however, and as there no longer existed any necessity for the keeping up of an establishment at this site, instructions had already been sent to the Commanding Officer at Jefferson Barracks to carry into effect the General Order No. 71, of 1836—"All the public property, Quartermaster and Commissary stores, will be left in charge of the Quartermaster's Department and be disposed of in the manner best suited for the public interest."

The last official communication from Fort Des Moines is dated June 1st, 1837, and signed by Lieut. Colonel Mason. He writes, "The post is this day abandoned, and the squadron takes up its march for Fort Leavenworth. It has been delayed until this date in order that the grass might be sufficiently high to afford grazing for the horses, as corn cannot be had on some parts of the route."

Of the officers who served in the command of the post, Lieutenant Colonels Kearny and Mason who became subsequently distinguished in the military and political history of the land, are treated of in the histories of other posts with whose career they were more eminently associated. To one subaltern more than the others was intrusted for a greater

period the duties of Adjutant, Quartermaster and Commissary, and who, during the absence of the command on its summer campaigns, was in command of the post. Second Lieutenant Benjamin S. Roberts joined the garrison at Des Moines from the Military Academy immediately upon his graduation, and remained with it during the whole duration of the post. His subsequent military career was most honorable, serving with high distinction during the war with Mexico, and reaching the position of Lieutenant-Colonel of the 3d Cavalry from which rank he was retired in 1870, having rendered nearly forty years active service in the Army. He died at Washington, D. C., January 29, 1875.

LIVING at headquarters as I did, I soon become intimate with Grant, not only knowing every one of his operations while it was still but an idea, but studying its execution on the spot. Grant was an uncommon fellow—the most modest, the most disinterested, and the most honest man I ever knew, with a temper that nothing could disturb and a judgment that was judicial in its comprehensiveness and wisdom. Not a great man, except morally; not an original or brilliant man, but sincere, thoughtful, deep, and gifted with courage that never faltered; when the time came to risk all he went in like a simple-hearted, unaffected, unpretending hero, whom no ill omens could deject and no triumph unduly exalt. A social, friendly man, too, fond of a pleasant joke and also ready with one; but, above all, fond of a long chat of an evening and ready to sit up with you all night talking in the cool breeze in front of his tent. Not a man of sentimentality, not demonstrative in friendship, but always holding to his friends and just even to the enemies he hated.—*Charles A. Dana's Recollections in McClure's Magazine, Jan. 1898.*

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